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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2006

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES

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US, Italy Support Turkey's Cyprus Plan - Milliyet
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Palestine Chooses Terror Organization, Israel Worried -
Milliyet
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US, Israel Won't Recognize HAMAS - Vatan
Gul Calls on HAMAS to Abide by Democratic Values - Milliyet
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OPINION MAKERS

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HAMAS Quake in Palestine - Cumhuriyet
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Radikal
HAMAS Ends al-Fatah Leadership Since 1954 - Yeni Safak
HAMAS Victory Will Benefit Rightist Parties in Israel -
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Blair: HAMAS Must Choose among Democracy, Violence - Yeni

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Annan: HAMAS Must Abandon Arms - Yeni Safak

International Community Calls on HAMAS to Lay Down Weapons - Zaman

US Releases 419 Iraqi Prisoners to have Carroll Freed - Radikal

Rugova Laid to Rest in Pristina - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Ankara Hails Straw's Courage in Visiting North Cyprus: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul hailed British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw as 'courageous' for visiting Turkish

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Cyprus in defiance of Greek Cypriot pressure, papers report. Straw has been the first western minister to visit Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat in his offices in the north of the divided island. Straw said at a joint press conference with Gul on Thursday that Greek Cypriots should also join Turkey's action plan for the resolution of the Cyprus problem, adding that the EU, UN and the UK had welcomed Turkey's new initiative. Straw stressed that Turkey ought to pass the EU customs union protocol by parliament and to open its ports for Greek Cypriot vessels if Ankara wanted progress in Turkey's EU entry bid. Gul warned that the Turkish side will give up its efforts for a settlement if the Greek Cypriots refuse to respond to the Turkish offers.

US Welcomes Turkey's New Cyprus Initiative: The US Administration welcomed Turkey's Cyprus action plan as a positive step forward that will contribute to efforts to solve the Cyprus problem, papers report. On Thursday, US

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Ankara Embassy in Ankara said that the US urges the sides in Cyprus to consider seriously the Turkish proposal. The US said that the Cyprus action plan announced by FM Gul was a positive and forward-looking attempt, adding that it was ready to back UN efforts for a settlement. The Italian Embassy in Ankara announced that Rome appreciated Turkish efforts for a breakthrough in Cyprus. Austria, Sweden, and Spain also supported the Turkish initiative, and initial reactions from China and Russia had been positive, according to papers. Kofi Annan is expected to disclose his views in a meeting with Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan in Davos today, say reports. Erdogan said Turkey is 'at least 10 steps ahead' of the Greek Cypriots in seeking efforts for a settlement on the island. "Radikal" claims that US Congressmen Robert Wexler (D) and Ed Whitfield (R) are planning to establish direct US flights to Turkish Cyprus.

Gul, Straw Discuss Iran: Unidentified sources told the Turkish press that Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul discussed with visiting British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw the issue of Iran's nuclear program. Turkey opposed nuclear weapons in the region, Gul said, stressing that countries only had the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Gul said Turkey told Iranian officials that Iran should cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the EU-troika, and should be transparent in its policies.

Amihay Criticizes Turkey's Ties with Iran, Syria: The Israeli Consul-General in Istanbul, Mordehay Amihay, criticized Turkey's ties with Iran and Syria, "Cumhuriyet" reports. 'Israel respects Turkish willingness to establish friendly ties with its neighbors. However, I don't think that Turkey would rescue Israel in case of turmoil in the region. And I don't think that Israel would ask Turkey for help,' Amihay told a symposium on Turkey-Israel ties, jointly organized by Israeli Consulate and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. "Cumhuriyet" regards the remarks of Amihay as criticism against Turkish ties with Iran and

Syria.

Palestine Election Results: Turkish papers give extensive coverage to Palestine elections, and the US reaction to the results. Dailies say that the HAMAS victory has put the Bush administration in a difficult position, but Palestinian voters elected a terrorist organization. 'We will not meet with them. The condition is that they must recognize Israel's right to exist,' papers quote President Bush. "Sabah" carries Secretary Rice's comment that 'You can't have one foot in politics and one foot in terror.'

MFA Commemorates Holocaust Victims: On Thursday, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) released a statement to mark the 61st anniversary of the liberation of the former Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. The United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution on 'Holocaust Remembrance Day' on November 1, 2005, the MFA recalled, and noted: 'During World War II, the Nazi regime in Germany carried out a systematic attempt to annihilate the entire Jewish race. More than 6 million Jews, together with countless other minorities, died at the hands of the Nazis. According to the resolution, January 27th was established as an International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.' Turkish people have always assisted Jewish people throughout the history, the MFA added: 'In 1492, Sultan Bayezid II of the Ottoman Empire sheltered Jewish people who were forced to leave their homes by the Inquisition. During World War II, Turkish diplomats such as Sebahattin Ulkumen, Necdet Kent

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and Namik Kemal Yolga saved Jewish people in Rhodes, Marseilles and Paris from being sent to concentration camps by endangering their own lives. Jewish scientists, who took shelter in Turkey, were assigned in leading universities, contributing to education of Turkish youth.' The MFA statement went on that 'on this very meaningful day, we commemorate all victims of the Holocaust with profound respect. We hope that all humanity has learned its lessons from this horrifying period, and that for the benefit of future generations, such incomparable evil events will never occur again.'

Turkey's Business Elite Oppose Early Polls, Call for Judicial Reform: Turkey's elite business group TUSIAD Chairman Mustafa Koc said on Thursday that elections should take place as scheduled for the sake of economic and political stability in the country. Turkish presidents are elected by parliament members in Turkey every seven years. The next parliamentary elections will be held in November 2007 while the presidential elections will be held in May 2007. The CHP and leftist groups want to prevent the election of the next president by members of the current parliament which is dominated by conservative AK Party lawmakers. On Cyprus, Koc said that TUSIAD backed the AKP government's push to resolve the problem. Koc also called for a complete reformation of the Turkish judicial system which came under attack over the court case brought against novelist Orhan Pamuk, and over the premature release of Pope John Paul II's attacker Mehmet Ali Agca.

EU to Give Turkey 10.4 Million USD to Fight against Bird Flu: Turkey's Bird Flu National Coordination Center stated on Thursday that 1,427,000 poultry have been culled so far across Turkey due to bird flu disease. EU health commissioner Markos Kiprianu said at a joint press conference after visiting Turkish Health Minister Recep Akdag in Ankara on Thursday the EU will soon release 8.5 million Euro (10.4 million USD) in support of Turkey's fight against the bird flu outbreak that has claimed four lives, the first human bird flu fatalities outside Southeast Asia and China. The European Commission on Thursday warned countries bordering Turkey not to hush up possible bird flu cases, following accusations by Ankara that some of its neighbors are concealing the disease.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Palestine Elections

"What Choice Will Hamas Make?"

Sami Kohen commented in the mainstream "Milliyet" (1/27):

"The election results indicate a complete reshuffle of balances in Palestine, because even the leaders of Hamas were not expecting such a big victory. In this regard, the Hamas victory and Fatah's defeat can be characterized as a political tremor in Palestine. . The air is full of speculation about what Hamas will do in the coming days. At this point, nobody knows whether Hamas will be able to change after coming to power, and whether it will carry out its political responsibilities as a ruling party. One possible option is that Hamas will go through a period of transformation, including giving up its doctrine concerning the elimination of Israel, restart the peace process with Israel, and abandon violence. . The other option is for Hamas to pursue its radical line and to try to implement it in daily lives. In this case, to what extent can we say that Hamas has met the expectation of the Palestinians who voted for it? In sum, the Palestinians have chosen Hamas - now we will see what choice Hamas will make."

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"Resistance Came From the Ballot Box"

Kenan Akin commented in the nationalist "Ortadogu" (1/27):

"The outcome of the Palestinian elections clearly indicates that the Middle East is a region of contradiction and conflicts. After gaining the majority of votes, Hamas immediately announced that it will not change its policy on the resistance. For its part, Israel announced that it will not recognize Hamas as the legitimate administration in Palestine until after it abandons its weapons. The election process was difficult enough, but the results will have the effect of creating more tension in the region. As a result, efforts to bring democracy in Palestine will bring terrorism and clashes as well. The majority of Palestinians -- tired of many years of occupation and resistance, and in a state of economic collapse - prefer an honorable peace. Although the majority of the Palestinians voted for Hamas, the main reason for this was to show their reaction to the current administration. But it does not seem possible that Hamas will abandon its radical policies easily. A radical Hamas administration will turn the Middle East into a very dangerous place once again."

WILSON